

Apostle Paul writes further, "Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." Eph. 4: 3-6. Here the Apostle instructs his Ephesian brethren to keep the unity of the Spirit, teaching them that there is but *one Spirit*, the "Holy Spirit," for Jews and Gentiles and all nations. This one Spirit was evidently the Holy Spirit, the third Person or Power in the triune Godhead, and that there is but one body or church built by Jesus Christ, and purchased with his own blood, the church of the first born. Only one body for all nations. One faith. That system of faith delivered unto the Saints, only one for all nations. One baptism. One Christian rite, or ordinance called baptism for Jews and Gentiles and all nations. It does seem to me that if the Apostle Paul recognized a water baptism and also a baptism of the Holy Spirit he would have said two baptisms; but he emphatically declared that there is but one, and that one was most assuredly the one through which Paul himself, and all Christians in all nations have been, or must be initiated into that one body the Church. By that one Spirit through whom the Gospel of Christ which is the power of God unto salvation was brought to the remembrance of the chosen witnesses, the twelve Apostles, and by them put on record in which the law of baptism is given as follows, "Go ye therefore and teach (or make disciples) of all nations, baptizing them in (or into) the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." By receiving the Christian rite according to the law of Jesus Christ and as brought to the remembrance of his chosen witnesses by the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, and through them as the true witnesses of Jesus Christ handed down to the present age and generation. All who are thus baptized, are by one Spirit; by that one baptism, baptized into one body. The assembly and Church of the first born, written (or enrolled) in heaven.

In a former article sent to the BRETHREN EVANGELIST, (which has not yet been published,) I have answered all of Brother Cassel's queries, and if not sufficiently clear I hope he will ask again. May the Lord sanctify the effort to his own glory, and the salvation of the world.

Blanco, Pa.

If life be long, I will be glad,
Then I may long obey;
If short, yet why should I be sad,
To soar to endless day?

THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE ORDINANCES.

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I.—INTRODUCTORY.

However much the past may have taught us, few will be stupid enough to assert that we have yet learned all. We have had our theologies. Good they have been, yet who will assert that they have been more than approximate approaches to an ultimate, a whole theology? They have been truth as far as they have gone, but we would be very unmindful of the greatness of truth and the limited capacity of the human mind to grasp the entirety of truth, should we assert that they have been the whole truth. God's truth is so large and our capacity for its discovery and acceptance so small, that doubtless humanity has much yet to learn about God and the reason of his great laws.

That there is a reason for all things God has commanded is very evident, since he is not a tyrant but a reasonable being. The lessons of the past are not adequate to present day needs. The message of God to a former age, unless it be universal in application, is not his message to our age. The interpretation of the Bible by men in former ages is not to be taken by us without any further search on our part. Men have learned the lessons as they saw them revealed in the word, but did those men exhaust that rich mine of wealth by their efforts? No. God's fulness is such that all men of all ages may delve and find rich rewards. The curse of every age is not that God has no live message for it, but that men do not open their eyes to see it, nor their ears to hear God speaking to them concerning the problems of human life and destiny.

For seven centuries did God patiently wait for some soul to open itself to the call he was uttering for a man to prophesy against the rottenness of popery.

Finally, beneath the corruption and darkness of that dark time did God's message find Luther's ears ready to hear.

For two more centuries did God call for men willing to go back to primitive Christianity, until he was heard by Alexander Mack. And for the fifty years preceding the organization of the Brethren church did God call to deaf ears for men willing once more to cut loose from human traditions, and leaving the past with its memories of dear associations launch out on the simple faith of God's Word.

So, slowly, painfully is God getting his will before human minds, incarnated in human wills to be poured out in sacrificial lives.

Hitherto as a church we have depended for the defense of our peculiar ordinances on the fact that we practice those followed by the immediate successors of Christ and his apostles. However, we have ignored the reasons for their practice either by those early Christians or ourselves. We have contended that God commanded these ordinances in his word, and the early Christians understood it so, therefore we as obedient children ought to obey without question or comment.

This assertion has been met by our opponents with the statement that, while God is the same always, yet his plan involves changes to meet the changed condition of different ages, people, climates, and stages of civilization. They argue that our times, people, climate, customs, and civilization are different from those in which Christ lived, and to suit which he gave these peculiar ordinances, hence, these ordinances should be relegated to those times for which they were intended. This seems plausible, but in fact is illogical, in that it begs the question in the premise, that the conditions of life, to suit which Jesus instituted them, are changed in our times, that the needs of men's lives, to meet which Jesus instituted those ordinances, are no longer what they were in the days of the Son of man. That such is the case our opponents have assumed without proof. That such is not the case is our assertion, to establish which is the object of these papers. Our assertion is that the evils, to correct which Jesus established ordinances now considered by many churches as non-essential, and the need of the lessons they were intended to teach are the same as in Jesus' time. What these conditions, needs and lessons are will appear as we proceed to discover the "ethical import" of these ordinances separately. However, preliminary to that, we shall offer a few thoughts on the general purpose of the ordinances. That they were given for a purpose is very evident to a sober mind. In fact the ultimate reason for their perpetuation is their end or purpose. This purpose was and is, that through them we may learn more of God's will and more of how to minister to the needs of men. The burden of God's efforts with humanity has been to bring it to a higher, a more *god like* life. God sent Christ to reveal to mankind in "the word made flesh," what God is and what he wishes men to become. All Christ taught, did and commanded was to make men more like God. "He came that men might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." What the world needed was life, God's quality of life, to bring which about he gave all the fulness